

In the specification:

Page 1, please change second paragraph as follows:

The usual "feed" today is 8 to 12 ports, but this can go up to as time goes by. The "speed" today is, say, OC192 (which is 10 gigabytes), but it can also go to OC768 which is 40 gigabytes, and then beyond.

Page 1, last paragraph and continuing on page 2, please change as follows:

To endeavor to meet some of the quality of service requirements concurrently with data "speed" and "feed" requirements, the prior art has most commonly taken the before-described input buffering approach, wherein the input data is locally buffered on an input port that has no "knowledge" of what input data may also be present at other input ports and contending for the same output port destination. The input port merely blindly makes the request of the input buffered switch to direct its data to the particular output port; and this prior architecture thus has had to live with its classic problems of potential head-of-the-line (HOL) blocking and inability to guarantee delay and jitter in quality of service. The input-buffered systems, accordingly, have to put up with sometimes even unrealistic periods of time before data can make its way to the switch for enabling transmission to destination output ports.